

CONFIDENTIAL BEGINNING FARMER SURVEY

Today's Date: ____/____/____

Client ID # _____

Enrollment Date: ____/____/____

Business status at entry: _____

Most recent business status: _____

Most Recent Business Status Date: ____/____/____

THIS SECTION TO BE COMPLETED BY INTERVIEWER AFTER SURVEY

Interviewer Name:		Interview Date:	
Interview Method:		Interview Length (time):	
	Follow-Up Tasks and/or Referrals for Client	Date Completed	Initials
	Survey Follow Up Tasks		
	Post coding:		
	Business status updates		
	Business growth events updates		
	Data cleaning		
	Data entry		
	Thank you card to client		

Interviewer Comments:

START SURVEY HERE

INTRODUCTION:

Thank you so much for scheduling this time to talk with me. As you know, we are conducting a confidential check-in to learn how you are doing after receiving services from ALBA in 2011. Most of the questions are about your results and changes over time. At the end of the survey we can talk about how ALBA can best meet your needs going forward.

- Your responses will help ALBA understand what it is going well and what improvements we should consider in our services.
- This survey will take at least one hour.
- Any information that you provide will remain strictly confidential and not affect your status with ALBA or any other agency.
- With complete financial information from you, ALBA will create confidential Farm Business Performance Report.
- Do you have your financial records about 2011 available to look at during the interview? We'll need to refer to them a few times.

Would this be a good time to begin?

1. Did you operate a business at any time during 2011?

- ☐ Yes (go to 1A) ☐ No (SKIP to question #6)
- ☐ Don't Know (DK) ☐ Refused to Answer (RF)

Prompt if necessary: A business is considered a business when it has made regular sales, which is likely to be more than one transaction in a 3-month period. The businesses start-up phase also has:

- Less than one year of regular sales
- Start up costs/expenses
- Developing & formalizing business operations, management procedures, etc.

1A. If Yes, how many businesses did you operate in 2011?

_____ # of Businesses ☐ DK ☐ RF

[If answer to #1A is >1: Prompt: "If you have multiple businesses, please answer these questions in terms of the farm business."]

2. Were you operating your own farm business when you first came to ALBA?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ DK ☐ RF

If Yes, what year did you start the ALBA program? _____ (pre-fill if possible)

3. When did you start your farm business?

_____ (MM/YYYY) ☐ DK ☐ RF

4. Is this the same farm business?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ DK ☐ RF

5. Did you sell or transfer ownership of your business?

☐ Yes ☐ No (go to #8) ☐ DK ☐ RF

If yes, when did you sell or transfer ownership to someone else?

_____ (MM/YYYY) ☐ DK ☐ RF

6. Did you stop owning or operating your business for any reason?

☐ Yes (go to 6A) ☐ No (go to #8)

6A Date stopped _____ (MM/YYYY) ☐ DK ☐ RF

7. Please describe to me why you decided to stop operating your business?

[Check the best answer based on client's response...don't read responses]

- ☐ Bankruptcy
- ☐ Insufficient sales
- ☐ Problems with business strategy
- ☐ Not enough time / maintain or get a job
- ☐ Health reason
- ☐ Other household concerns made continuation of the business difficult
- ☐ Moved
- ☐ Other (please specify) ☐ DK ☐ RF

7A. Please specify other _____

Prompt: This can include details of if the business was sold, transferred or closed at a profit, loss or breakeven.

8. Now I'm going to read you a list of choices about your highest priority for assistance when you first came to ALBA. Please choose the **one** that best fits your highest priority at that time. Were you trying to:

- ☐ start a farm business?
- ☐ improve your existing farm business?
- ☐ grow the size of your farm business?
- ☐ deal with immediate problems?
- ☐ other? (specify below) ☐ DK ☐ RF

8A. Specify other _____

9. To what extent did the ALBA program meet your expectations? Please listen to the complete list of four possible answers I'll read and then select the **one** that is best for you.
- ☐ Exceeded
 - ☐ Completely
 - ☐ Mostly
 - ☐ Mostly not
 - ☐ Not At All
 - ☐ DK
 - ☐ RF

10. Were the skills you received at ALBA useful in other areas of your life outside of business?
- ☐ Yes (go to 10A) ☐ No ☐ DK ☐ RF

10A. **If yes:** Now I'm going to read a list of ways those skills may have been useful to you. Please answer yes if it was useful.

- ☐ Financial skills/budgeting
- ☐ Community involvement/participation
- ☐ Get a better job
- ☐ Gain agriculture experience/skills
- ☐ Understand credit and financing
- ☐ Enroll in higher education
- ☐ Interpersonal/networking
- ☐ Other (Please specify:) _____

11. Do you have any comments about the other ways the program was helpful and useful?
-

-
12. Is there anything that ALBA could have done better to meet your expectations for assistance?

Now I'm going to ask you a few questions about your farm business in 2011.

13. How many acres did you farm at ALBA in 2011? _____

13A. How many additional acres were there at ALBA in 2011? [**over 2010**] _____

13B. How many acres did you farm 'Outside ALBA' in 2011? _____

13C. If so, how many new acres outside ALBA in 2011? _____

13D. Were the new acres "Outside the Incubator"?

☐ Yes ☐ No

14. Is [**or was**] all of your farm certified organic?

☐ Yes (go to 14B) ☐ No (go to 14A)

14A. Is the non-certified land in transition? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A

14B. Was your business under ALBA certification? ☐ Yes ☐ No

14C. Was your business under your own certification? ☐ Yes ☐ No

14D. When did your farm become certified organic?

_____ (MM/YYYY) ☐ DK ☐ RF

15. Please generally describe your farm business in 2011.

[Interviewer: Be sure the description allows NAICS classification – most likely one of these options:]

Codes	Titles
111210	Other Vegetables (except Potato) and Melon Farming
111333	Strawberry Farming
111419	Other Food Crops Grown Under Cover (greenhouse)
111998	All Other Miscellaneous Crop Farming
112310	Chicken Egg Production
112320	Broilers and Other Meat Type Chicken Production
112910	Apiculture
115112	Soil Preparation, Planting and Cultivating
115114	Postharvest Crop Activities (except Cotton Ginning)
115115	Farm Labor Contractors and Crew Leaders

16. Enter NAICS Code of the business _____
17. Did you share ownership of the business with others?
- ☐ Yes
 - ☐ No (*skip to question #19*)
 - ☐ DK (*skip to question #19*)
 - ☐ RF (*skip to question #19*)
18. Is the business a sole proprietor/family-owned business, a partnership or a cooperative?
- ☐ Sole proprietor/family-owned
 - ☐ Partnership
 - ☐ Cooperative
 - ☐ DK
 - ☐ RF

Now we are going to talk about business plans. A formal business plan contains a plan for each part of the farm business including a farm management plan, agriculture market plan, crop plan, soil fertility plan, pest, disease and weed management plan, and financial projections. An informal plan includes only a crop plan and financial projections.

19. During 2011 did you create or update a formal business plan for your farm?
☐ Yes ☐ No (go to 19A)

19A. If no, did you create an informal business plan? ☐ Yes ☐ No

19B. When did you complete your business plan _____ (month/date/year)

20. Did you benefit from any USDA programs in 2011?
☐ Yes (go to 20A) ☐ No (go to 20B) ☐ Don't know (go to 20B) ☐ Refused

[For example, did you get an FSA loan guarantee, EQIP agreement, or emergency assistance?]

20A. What type of USDA program? **[check all that apply]**
☐ FSA ☐ NRCS ☐ Other

20B. If not, would you like to learn about USDA programs?
☐ Yes ☐ No

[If Yes, please advise that staff will contact them if they indicated they would like more information about USDA programs. Make note on page 1.]

21. On average, did you work on your own farm full-time, part-time, or seasonally in 2011?
[Full-time represents at least 35 hours a week]

☐ Full-Time (year-round)
☐ Part-Time (year-round)
☐ Seasonal ☐ DK ☐ RF

22. How many months of the year did you work on your farm in 2011?

_____ # of months ☐ DK ☐ RF

23. How many hours per week did you typically work at your farm in 2011?

_____ # of hours ☐ DK ☐ RF

Now I'm going to ask some questions about your finances in 2011. We'll be using some of your financial records. Do you have them available still? Remember, all this information is strictly confidential.

24. Did you make a personal monetary investment in your farm business in 2011?
☐ Yes (go to 24A) ☐ No (go to 24B) ☐ Don't know ☐ Refused to answer

24A. Please identify type and amount of personal investments:

Owner Investments	\$ Amount	Date
Personal savings/income from job		
Business proceeds reinvested		
Retirement funds distribution		
Other or notes:		

24B. During 2011 did you apply for financing for your farm?

☐ Yes ☐ No (go to 25A) ☐ Don't know ☐ Refused to answer

24C. During 2011 did you receive any financing for your farm?

☐ Yes (go to 24E) ☐ No (go to 24D) ☐ Don't know ☐ Refused to answer

24D. Did you receive a denial letter?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A

24E. What type of financing was rec'd and what dollar amount?

[Interviewer: Be sure to prompt about financing type. Please use the following graph to record answers by financing option(s).]

Financing Type	\$ Requested	\$ Received	Date Rec'd	Source
Family & Friends (personal loans)				
Commercial Bank Loan*				
Bank Line of Credit*				
Non-profit Lender (or CDFI)*				
Indiv. Development Acct (IDA)				
Private Investor(s)				
Customers (personal loans)				
Crowdfunding (Kickstarter, Prosper, etc)				
FSA Loan				
Other or notes:				

**** - If bank loan or line of credit, please ask:***

24D. Did a family member co-sign for the loan or financing?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Don't know ☐ Refused to answer

[At this point, do a review of the loan amounts and dates recorded above.]

Now we are going to discuss your sales income and other results of your business.

- 25A. What were your ALBA Organics sales during 2011?
\$ _____ ☐ DK ☐ RF
- 25B. What were sales to Other Wholesale during 2011?
\$ _____ ☐ DK ☐ RF
- 25C. What were your sales to Other Farmers during 2011?
\$ _____ ☐ DK ☐ RF
- 25D. What were your Direct Marketing sales? (farmers' markets, farm stands, CSA, and direct-to-retail)
\$ _____ ☐ DK ☐ RF
- 25E. **It appears that your total farm income was (add 25A, 25B and 25C)**
\$ _____ Does this sound accurate to you?
26. What level of satisfaction do you have with your current marketing channels?
☐ Very satisfied
☐ Moderately satisfied
☐ Adequate
☐ Moderately unsatisfied
☐ Very unsatisfied
☐ RF
27. Would you like additional assistance developing markets?
☐ Yes **[make note on page 1]** ☐ No
28. How much did you pay in state and federal income taxes on your farm income in 2011?
\$ _____ ☐ DK ☐ RF
29. Please indicate which one of the following represents how you feel about the progress of your farm business development so far?
☐ Very satisfied
☐ Somewhat satisfied
☐ Neither satisfied, nor dissatisfied
☐ Somewhat dissatisfied
☐ Very dissatisfied
☐ DK
☐ RF
30. How well would you say the amount you paid yourself from your business meets the goals you had for your business?

- ☐ Very much exceeded expectations (*skip to question #33*)
- ☐ Exceeded Expectations (*skip to question #33*)
- ☐ Met expectations (*skip to question #33*)
- ☐ Somewhat met expectations
- ☐ Did not at all meet expectations
- ☐ DK
- ☐ RF

31. What is the main reason you feel your expectations were not met?

[Do not read responses – match response to one category below.]

- ☐ Underestimated expenses
- ☐ Broader market and state of the economy
- ☐ Market took longer to develop; fewer customers than anticipated
- ☐ Business took more time than expected
- ☐ Business needed more capital than expected
- ☐ Personal issues or illness of owner or family members
- ☐ Other **[go to 32A]**
- ☐ DK
- ☐ RF

31A. Please specify Other _____

32. What could ALBA do to help prepare you for future challenges?

33. Did the performance of your farm improve the financial circumstances of your household in 2011 a lot, a little, no difference, not much or not at all?

- ☐ Yes, a lot
- ☐ Yes, a little
- ☐ No difference
- ☐ No, not much
- ☐ No, not at all
- ☐ DK
- ☐ RF

34. Did family members work on your farm without pay in 2011?

- ☐ Yes (go to 32A) ☐ No ☐ Don't know ☐ Refused to answer

35A How many family? _____

35B How many total hours per week on average? _____

35. Including yourself, how many paid employees or contractors did your business have in the following categories? [**do not include unpaid positions above**]

Prompt: If you had a partner who was taking a draw, please count him/her as an employee and enter details below

Full-time (at least 35 hrs/week) jobs (12 mos/not seasonal) **created** in 2011 _____

Full-time jobs (12 months - not seasonal) **retained** in 2011 _____

Part-time (includes seasonal employment) **created** in 2011 _____

Part-time (includes seasonal employment) **retained** in 2011 _____

36. What was your total farm wage/labor contractor expense in 2011?
(do not include Owner's Draw)

\$_____ ☐ Don't know ☐ Refused to answer

37. What was your total Other Farm Expenses in 2011? (includes land rental/loan payments, utilities, irrigation, equipment, repairs, seeds, etc)

\$_____ ☐ Don't know ☐ Refused to answer

38. It appears that your **Net Farm Income Before Taxes** was \$_____ in 2011.

[At this point it is helpful to reference Owner's Draw (immediately below) in order for client to understand the full picture of expenses]

25D Total Farm Income	
- 37 Total Labor Expense	
- 38 Total Other Expense	
Net Farm Income Before Taxes	

Prompt: Your net farm income before taxes is _____
Does this sound accurate to you?

39. How much income did you actually pay yourself (or your business partner or family) from your farm in 2011?

Prompt: This is called Owner's Draw (or 'draw') which is the amount taken out by the owner of a sole proprietorship or partnership for personal use. A self-employed business owner does not usually take a salary. Instead, he or she makes an initial investment in the business from personal funds and during the course of the business takes money out as a "draw."

\$_____ ☐ DK ☐ RF

40. Do you have a business checking account?
☐ Yes ☐ No (go to 40B) ☐ RF

40B. Would you like a staff member to assist you in starting an account?
☐ Yes ☐ No

[If Yes, make note on page 1]

Now I am going to help you complete a Business Balance Sheet. It will create a snapshot of the business value as of the end of the year, on December 31, 2011. Please review and determine dollar estimates for the following:

ASSETS These are economic resources capable of being owned or controlled to produce value for your business.

Checking/Cash on Hand _____

Savings _____

Accounts Receivable _____

Seeds/Transplants _____

Supplies/Storage _____

Growing Crops _____ (plant materials providing future harvest, berries, trees, etc)

Autos and Trucks _____

Tractors and Equipment _____

Contracts/Notes Receivable _____ (confirmed income due to farm business)

Ag Real Estate/Farmland _____

LIABILITIES These are financial *obligations* arising from *past* transactions or events.

Property Taxes Payable _____

Income Taxes Payable _____

Accounts Payable _____ (includes credit cards)

Accrued Liabilities _____ (money that you will owe for services rendered)

Note Payable #1 _____ (non-mortgage loans)

Detail _____ (source of financing)

Note Payable #2 _____

Detail _____

Note Payable #3 _____

Detail _____

Note Payable #4 _____

Detail _____

Financial Leases _____ (long-term lease obligations)

Farm Mortgage _____

Farm Mortgage Detail _____ (source of financing)

Now I'm going to ask you a few questions about your work status and also about your household – the other people who lived with you and shared expenses in 2011.

41. Did you have another job or other jobs outside your business in 2011?

☐ Yes ☐ No (skip to 43) ☐ RF

42. Was this work part-time or full-time? Full-time is at least 35 hours of work a week.

☐ Part-Time ☐ Full-Time ☐ DK ☐ RF

43. Counting yourself, your spouse or partner, and including children, how many people lived with you and shared income **and** expenses during 2011?

Please do not include roommates who only shared expenses with you. Include extended family or significant others if they share income and expenses. If this changed during the year, please tell me the number who were there for the longest period of time.

_____Number of people in household ☐ DK ☐ RF

Next we are going to talk a little more about your farm business and other sources of Household Income. Remember, all this information is strictly confidential.

44. Please let me know if you received income from each source BEFORE taxes.

44A Your Own Off-Farm Income (Farmer's Non-Farm Income) \$ _____

44B Wages and Other Family Income (including job held by farmer, if applicable)

\$ _____

This next one is a yes or no question...

45. Do you know your credit score? ☐ Yes (skip to 46) ☐ No

45A. If no, would you like ALBA to help you obtain your credit report?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ DK ☐ RF

[If Yes, Make note on Page 1]

46. Have you filed a tax return in the past three years?

☐ Yes (go to 46A) ☐ No ☐ Don't know ☐ Refused to answer

46A. If yes, did you file a Schedule F for your farm business?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Don't know ☐ Refused to answer

47. Did you have health insurance for yourself in 2011?

☐ Yes (go to 47A) ☐ No (go to 47B) ☐ RF

47A. What was the source of your health insurance?

- ☐ Your (other) job
- ☐ Your spouse's job
- ☐ Your business
- ☐ Free state health insurance
- ☐ Medicaid
- ☐ Medicare
- ☐ Private policy
- ☐ Other

47B. Did other members of your household have health insurance?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ DK ☐ RF

47C. How many members?

- ☐ All members insured
- ☐ Some members insured

- No members insured
 - N/A – I live along
48. How important is it to you for something to be done about your access to health insurance?
- Extremely important
 - Somewhat important
 - Important
 - No so important
 - Not at all important
 - DK
 - RF
49. What is your highest educational level completed?
- No grade school
 - Elementary school
 - High School
 - College
 - Graduate or Professional School
 - DK
 - RF
50. Were you a seasonal or migrant farm worker in 2011?
- Yes
 - No
51. Were you (and/or your family) using any form of public assistance in 2011?
[this includes, for example, food stamps or welfare]
- Yes
 - No
52. What additional services or assistance do you think would be helpful for your business at this time? **[read all responses – check all that apply]**
- Increased assistance to gain financing
 - Increased assistance to access markets
 - Increased assistance in gaining access to land
 - Increased business skills
 - More practical experience (e.g. field demonstrations)
 - Increased assistance in developing language skills (English or Spanish)
 - DK
 - RF
53. Were you involved in any community organizations in 2011?
- Yes ○ No

53A. If yes, would you consider your involvement to be as:

☐ Leader OR ☐ Participant

53B. If Yes, please list which organizations:

54. Did you work collaboratively or in partnership with other farmers in 2011?
(at ALBA or outside of ALBA)

☐ Yes ☐ No

54A. If Yes, is this a formal partnership/collaboration? ☐ Yes ☐ No

54B. What is the name of your partnership/collaboration if one is available?

55. Where do you seek farm advice apart from ALBA's program?

[read all responses – check all that apply]

- ☐ University of California Cooperative Extension
- ☐ USDA (NRCS and/or FSA)
- ☐ Other Nonprofit Organizations
- ☐ Pest Control Adviser
- ☐ Farm Input Supplier
- ☐ ALBA Farmers
- ☐ Other (non-ALBA) Farmers
- ☐ Conferences and Workshops
- ☐ Internet
- ☐ Books
- ☐ DK
- ☐ RF

56. Are you a member of a farm organization?

☐ Yes ☐ No

56A. What is the name of the organization(s)?

57. Are you currently interested in getting more assistance from ALBA now or in the near future?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not sure

58. Would like an ALBA staff member to call you?

☐ Yes ☐ No

[If Yes, make note on page 1]

59. Before we finish up, do you have any questions, requests, suggestions or any comments that you would like to add?

This is the end of the survey, but we need to update some contact info. [see next page]

In case you were to move or relocate, could you provide the names of two people whom ALBA could contact in order to relay a message to you?

Contact information for 2 people we can call in an emergency or if you move:

1) Name: _____ 2) Name: _____

Relationship to you: _____ Relationship to you: _____

Phone Number 1: (____) _____ Phone Number 1: (____) _____

Phone # 2. (____) _____ Phone # 2. (____) _____

[See below for additional contract information updates.]

Have you moved or changed your contact information recently? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, please update your contact information:

Address

(home): _____

City: _____ **State:** _____ **Zip:** _____

Address (mailing): _____

City: _____ **State:** _____ **Zip:** _____

Address (business location): _____

City:_____ **State:**_____ **Zip:**_____

Phone #1:_____ ☐ **Home** ☐ **Work** ☐ **Cell** ☐ **Other**_____

Phone #2:_____ ☐ **Home** ☐ **Work** ☐ **Cell** ☐ **Other**_____

E-mail Address: _____

Web Site: _____

THANK YOU!